

**Background  
Information**  
from  
**Congressman  
Joe Pitts**



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**202 225-2411**

**Wednesday, October 08, 2003**  
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**SOURCE: The White House**

## **Preventing Domestic Violence**

Today in the East Room, President Bush recognized October as Domestic Violence Awareness Month, announcing new initiatives designed to address the problem of domestic violence in America's communities.

- ✓ The President announced the creation of the Family Justice Centers initiative by the Department of Justice in coordination with other agencies to help local communities provide comprehensive services under one roof to victims of domestic violence.
- ✓ President Bush also announced the creation of the Safe and Bright Futures for Children initiative from the Department of Health and Human Services which will provide grants to community and faith-based organizations to bring together services helping children who witness domestic violence to prevent the cycle of violence from continuing from one generation to the next.
- ✓ Finally, the President announced that the Stop Family Violence postage stamp went on sale today across the U.S. which will raise money for domestic violence prevention efforts.

### **BACKGROUND ON PRESIDENTIAL ACTION**

Domestic violence is a serious problem affecting women, men and children of all backgrounds. According to the National Crime Victimization Survey, there were nearly 700,000 documented incidents of domestic violence affecting individuals and families in 2001. President Bush is committed to preventing domestic violence, addressing the effects of domestic violence on all Americans, and has secured historic levels of funding for the Violence Against Women programs at the Department of Justice.

In the FY 2002 budget, the President requested and secured approximately a \$100 million increase in funding for these programs, and has continued to provide similar levels of funding in the FY 2003 and FY 2004 budgets. Federal prosecutions relating to violence against women increased by 35% in FY 2002. The Bush Administration is committed to zero tolerance towards domestic violence.

### **Family Justice Centers**

- ✓ Victims of domestic violence often are forced to seek help in a fragmented system of separate agencies offering uncoordinated services. The Family Justice Center initiative

will make a victim's search for assistance and justice much easier during a difficult time. The Centers will provide comprehensive services for victims of domestic violence at one location, including medical care, counseling, law enforcement assistance, faith-based services, social services, employment assistance, and housing assistance.

- ✓ Through an interagency effort led by the Department of Justice, the Bush Administration will award \$20 million in grants in FY 2004 funds to help establish and support Family Justice Centers in 12 communities partnering with local community leaders, nonprofit agencies, corporate partners, and government agencies.

### **Safe and Bright Futures for Children**

- ✓ Children who witness domestic violence have a greater chance of continuing a cycle of violence, and it is therefore critical to address the needs of children traumatized by domestic violence. The Safe and Bright Futures for Children initiative will provide treatment and support to help children affected by domestic violence to break the cycle of violence.
- ✓ In times of crisis, many victims of domestic violence turn to the faith community, and the Federal Government is working to partner with faith-based organizations. The Department of Health and Human Services will award \$5 million in grants in FY 2004 to community and faith-based organizations to bring together local services to help children and youth who witness domestic violence. The Initiative will provide crisis intervention and counseling, and will coordinate violence prevention and youth development strategies.

### **Stop Family Violence postage stamp release**

- ✓ Today, the Stop Family Violence postage stamp went on sale in post offices across the U.S. raising money for domestic violence prevention programs including the new Safe and Bright Futures for Children grants through the Department of Health and Human Services.
- ✓ This is only the third time in the U.S. Postal Service history that it has issued a fundraising stamp.

*For more information on the President's Initiatives, please visit [www.whitehouse.gov](http://www.whitehouse.gov)*